

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for selecting a vendor based on a list of user-selected products,
2 comprising the steps of:
3 (a) receiving a plurality of product identifiers from a user, wherein each product
4 identifier is associated with a particular product;
5 (b) generating a list of the products;
6 (c) searching for vendors of the products on the list;
7 (d) selecting a vendor of the products based on predetermined criteria; and
8 (e) outputting information about the selected vendor.

- 1 2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the product identifier is a representation
2 of a bar code associated with the product.

- 1 3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the vendor is selected based on the
2 number of products on the list available from the vendor.

- 1 4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the criteria for selecting the vendor
2 include at least one of price, proximity to the vendor, availability of delivery,
3 whether the products are in stock, wrapping availability, shipping availability,
4 tracking availability, and a loyalty program.

- 1 5. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of determining an
2 availability of the products at each of a plurality of vendors, determining costs of
3 the products charged by each of the vendors, and outputting summaries of the
4 determinations.

- 1 6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein a promotional offer is output with the
2 information about the selected vendor.
- 1 7. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein steps (a)-(e) are repeated in real time
2 each time a product identifier is received from the user.
- 1 8. A computer program product for selecting a vendor based on a list of user-
2 selected products, comprising:
3 (a) computer code for receiving a plurality of product identifiers from a user,
4 wherein each product identifier is associated with a particular product;
5 (b) computer code for generating a list of the products;
6 (c) computer code for searching for vendors of the products on the list;
7 (d) computer code for selecting a vendor of the products based on predetermined
8 criteria; and
9 (e) computer code for outputting information about the selected vendor.
- 1 9. A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein the product
2 identifier is a representation of a bar code associated with the product.
- 1 10. A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein the vendor is
2 selected based on the number of products on the list available from the vendor.
- 1 11. A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein the criteria for
2 selecting the vendor include at least one of price, proximity to the vendor,
3 availability of delivery, whether the products are in stock, wrapping availability,
4 shipping availability, tracking availability, and a loyalty program.
- 1 12. A computer program product as recited in claim 8, further comprising computer
2 code for determining an availability of the products at each of a plurality of

3 vendors, computer code for determining costs of the products charged by each
4 of the vendors, and computer code for outputting summaries of the
5 determinations.

1 13. A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein a promotional offer
2 is output with the information about the selected vendor.

1 14. A computer program product as recited in claim 8, wherein the computer code is
2 executed in real time each time a product identifier is received from the user.

1 15. A system for selecting a vendor based on a list of user-selected products,
2 comprising:

3 (a) logic for receiving a plurality of product identifiers from a user, wherein each
4 product identifier is associated with a particular product;
5 (b) logic for generating a list of the products;
6 (c) logic for searching for vendors of the products on the list;
7 (d) logic for selecting a vendor of the products based on predetermined criteria; and
8 (e) logic for outputting information about the selected vendor.

1 16. A system as recited in claim 15, wherein the product identifier is a
2 representation of a bar code associated with the product.

1 17. A system as recited in claim 15, wherein the vendor is selected based on the
2 number of products on the list available from the vendor.

1 18. A system as recited in claim 15, wherein the criteria for selecting the vendor
2 include at least one of price, proximity to the vendor, availability of delivery,
3 whether the products are in stock, wrapping availability, shipping availability,
4 tracking availability, and a loyalty program.

- 1 19. A system as recited in claim 15, further comprising logic for determining an
- 2 availability of the products at each of a plurality of vendors, logic for
- 3 determining costs of the products charged by each of the vendors, and logic for
- 4 outputting summaries of the determinations.
- 1 20. A system as recited in claim 15, wherein a promotional offer is output with the
- 2 information about the selected vendor.